

**Determinants of Employees Job Satisfaction in Polish Enterprises–Findings of Empirical Studies**

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**Abstract:** Employees' job satisfaction is influenced by a number of diverse determinants which are related with the work performed by an employee, depend on individual characteristics of an employee, and result from the features of the environment in which a given organisation is functioning. Job satisfaction affects the functioning of an enterprise, its competitiveness and profitability, and high level of employees' satisfaction may be a key factor impacting the success of the whole organisation. The aim of the paper is to show which determinants of job satisfaction, and at what level, can be distinguished among employees of Polish enterprises, depending on selected variables. A questionnaire survey conducted in 2015 on a group of 158 enterprises enabled identification of statistical dependences and verification of formulated research hypotheses which defined, among other things: the impact of the determinants of employees' job satisfaction depending on the age of a company, its size, or period of employment of its employees.

**Keywords:** *Employees' job satisfaction, satisfaction determinants, Polish enterprises*

**1. Introduction**

Job satisfaction is a central concept in organizational psychology, and research on its determinants and outcomes has strong practical relevance for management of human resources (Hauff, Richter, Tressin, 2015). Job satisfaction is critical to life satisfaction, to the quality of employees' working life, and to their performance and organizational commitment (Moniarou-Papaconstantinou & Triantafyllou, 2015). Many entrepreneurs attach great importance to satisfaction of an employee, assuming that increased satisfaction will lead to increased work effectiveness. The concepts presenting how job satisfaction is shaped indicate the role of both an organisation and working environment in this process as well as factors that exist in an individual and affect the level of satisfaction. The subject of job satisfaction attracts undiminished interest of both researchers and management practitioners. This results in a number of definitions of the concept of job satisfaction provided by literature. In general, employees' satisfaction is a positive attitude to their enterprise, co-workers and work they do. One of the most widely used definitions in economic literature is that of Locke (1976), who defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". Thus, job satisfaction refers to positive or/and negative feelings and attitudes towards work, shaped by a number of factors connected with one's work, individual factors connected with the person of an employee and characteristics of the environment in which a specific organisation is functioning.

It is pointed out that employees with higher job satisfaction show more initiative, less reluctance to innovations, are more loyal to the company for which they are working, create a specific organisational climate and have a lower level of absence (Bartkowiak, 2009). This impacts not only profitability but also competitiveness of an organisation operating in the conditions of globalisation (Mynarzová & Kaňa, 2014). Therefore, it is very important to examine job satisfaction and relationships between the different elements of work and job satisfaction. The aim of this paper is to show which determinants of job satisfaction, and at what level, can be distinguished among employees in manufacturing, services and commercial enterprises, depending on the size of a company, how long it has been functioning on the market and how long an employee has been working in a given company. Its aim is also to define possibilities of employees' personal development in various groups of enterprises. The inference performed in this paper is based on findings of questionnaire surveys conducted in 2015 on a group of 158 enterprises carrying out economic activity across Poland.

## **2. Employees' Job Satisfaction and its Determinants in the Process of Functioning of an Organisation - Selected Aspects**

The importance of work in the life of a human being is huge and undeniable, and job satisfaction is one of the most important elements affecting employees' satisfaction, their performance and effectiveness (Potkany, 2008; Potkany & Giertl, 2013). Bartkowiak stresses that satisfaction is an element of a human being's motivation in a broader sense or well-being, which results from fulfilment of their needs and aspirations (Bartkowiak, 2009). Job satisfaction has turned out to be closely connected with life satisfaction (see Judge, & Watanabe, 1993). In general, job satisfaction is defined as a positive attitude reflected in an employee's opinion about the work they do and its character (Mincu, 2015). Koys (2003) defines job satisfaction as a way in which an employee perceives and assesses their work, whereas Bernhardt, Donthu and Kennett (2000) claim that job satisfaction refers to more personal feelings and involves a personal evaluation of working conditions as well as results of performed work. According to Herzberg (1987), satisfaction is achieved through the character of work, while dissatisfaction results from work affecting factors, such as remuneration (Conte & Landy, 2010). Employees' satisfaction affects effectiveness and profitability of an enterprise, and thus implementation of long-term plans of every organisation (Rostkowski, 2004). Research confirms a positive relationship between employees' job satisfaction and their effectiveness, which impacts not only employees' effectiveness at work but also the effectiveness of the whole organisation (Koys, 2001). As Sienkiewicz (2010) stresses, market success in a turbulent environment requires employees that are ready to learn (Gorzeń-Mitka, 2013), as this helps them respond to changes, be creative and easily embrace new work methods or tools. Academic literature also offers empirical studies of the business sector which show a positive relationship between a learning organisation and job satisfaction of its employees (Kurland & Hasson-Gilad, 2015).

According to Saari and Judge (2004), job satisfaction is a result of a number of factors resulting e.g. from employees' conduct and positive or negative attitude to work. Spector (1997) stresses that job satisfaction that affects employees' satisfaction depends on a range of factors that include remuneration, additional benefits, leadership style, supervision in an organisation, character of the work, as well as personality of co-workers. Steers and Mowday (1981) emphasize that every employee will have a slightly different set of expectations about their work, depending on their own values and needs in a given moment. Therefore, satisfaction factors indicated by employees will vary depending on the character of the organisation itself, the environment in which it functions as well as personal objectives and preferences of an individual employee. Job satisfaction is determined by the microenvironment, including political, social, economic and cultural environment (Kaasa, 2011; Towski, 2011), as it is hard to separate organisations functioning in a certain environment from their employees. Another factor influencing satisfaction of an organisation's employees is the organisational culture existing in that enterprise. Some studies show a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational culture (Lovas, 2007; Fleskova & Podolcova, 2010; Sipa, 2015) and between running a socially responsible business and satisfaction of employees of organisations implementing sustainable programmes (Fleskova, 2011; Chudy, 2012).

The significance of factors affecting employees' satisfaction can be connected, as Springer (2011) shows in his research, with the position held and type of performed work. A different set of factors will be important and relevant for the lowest-level employees than for specialists or independent employees. Therefore different employees will have different preferences concerning working conditions and will choose work based on different features (Shin, Koh & Shim, 2015). The choice of the right profession, position at work or work character has a direct impact on an employee's satisfaction, and their criteria for choosing the future job should correspond to their expectations or be closely correlated with them. Ellickson, and Logsdon (2002), in their research into job satisfaction factors, confirmed that there are no differences between sexes as far as general job satisfaction is concerned. The research did not find out a different range of factors for working women and men. Based on multinational research, Hauff, Richter, Tressin (2015) stress that job satisfaction factors will vary across countries. Some factors have equal impact on job satisfaction in different countries, e.g.: high income, good relations with co-workers, whereas other factors vary across the countries examined, e.g. security or chance of promotion. Sense of security, as an important determinant of job satisfaction, can both increase and decrease satisfaction level (Green & Tsisianis, 2005).

An important factor affecting job satisfaction is good relations with superiors, who should strive to eliminate employees' discomfort and distrust. Good relations with superiors can affect performance and mutual relations, which in turn leads to better communication in an organisation (Ellickson, Logsdon, 2002). Research by Quintan, Park and Cabrera (2015) shows that the leader of an organisation is significant for and affects employees' satisfaction. A leadership style affects not only the economic result of an enterprise's activity, but also employees' satisfaction, which in turn affects the success of the whole organisation (Havig et al., 2011). The personality of the leader in an organisation, their leadership style, can impact the feelings of employees, who, having different personalities may vary in how they feel job satisfaction. (Yun et al. 2007). Employees' involvement, as another factor impacting success of an organisation, can also depend on employees' job satisfaction. Research by Bhuvanaiah and Ray (2014) shows that the issue of employees' involvement is closely connected with the success of an organisation and practically results from job satisfaction. An uninvolved employee is hardly likely to feel job satisfaction. Employees' job satisfaction can also be connected with how long they have been employed in a given company, as studies indicate that people who have worked in a certain company for a shorter period of time show a higher level of satisfaction with their work compared to those working longer than 15 years (Tomovska-Misoska et al., 2014). Further, job satisfaction has a negative impact on staff's voluntary rotations, which affect operating expenses, especially in enterprises using the latest technologies (Kessler, 2014). There is also a significant difference between part-time and full-time employees in terms of job satisfaction. Full-time employees show a higher level of job satisfaction compared to part-time or temporary employees (Giannikis & Mihail, 2010).

Research into factors affecting employees' job satisfaction also focused on examining job satisfaction factors of employed and self-employed persons. Research of Blanchflower (2004), Hamermesh (1977), Clark (1996), Clark et al. (1998) among others, shows that self-employment usually gives more pleasure and satisfaction compared to employed persons. A significant role is played here by advantages of self-employment, such as flexible working hours, freedom to take decisions, or lack of a direct superior. One should however bear in mind that not every employed person can function well as a self-employed person, due to the characteristics of self-employment listed as the advantages of self-employment (Lemańska-Majdzik, 2009). It has also been shown that processes taking place in an organisation, understood as a sequence of interrelated actions taken by a specific employee in an organisation to bring intended effects for the enterprise, have an impact on their job satisfaction, due to e.g. the use of technology. It is also important in this case whether given business processes are being implemented in an organisation or only improved (Bala & Venkatesh, 2013). A different range of determinants will be indicated by employees who, working in an organisation, are implementing a system of process management.

### **3. Methodology and characterisation of the study group**

The aim of the survey was to show job satisfaction determinants of employees in manufacturing, services and commercial enterprises operating across Poland, depending on the size of a company, how long a company has been functioning on the market and how long an employee has been working in a given company, and to define the possibilities of employees' personal development. Given the main aim of the paper, the following research hypotheses have been formulated:

- H1 - in smaller enterprises, job satisfaction determinants have a stronger impact on the increase in a job satisfaction level than in larger companies;
- H2 - in enterprises that have been functioning on the market for a shorter period of time, job satisfaction determinants have a stronger impact on the increase in a job satisfaction level than in enterprises with a longer history of operation;
- H3 - how long an employee has been working in a given enterprise impacts their selection of job satisfaction determinants.

A statistical analysis of a survey results enabled full or partial verification of the hypotheses formulated. The survey used a purposive sampling. It was conducted in Q1 of 2015 on a group of 158 employees of small, medium-sized and large enterprises operating across Poland. The research tool was a survey questionnaire containing 13 closed questions. The sample was not fully representative, therefore the survey should be treated as pilot research that can be used to further explore the issue in the future by conducting representative research. However, the size of the sample allows initial conclusions to be drawn and

regularities to be identified. The findings presented in the paper are only a fragment of empirical studies conducted. In order to determine factors affecting employees' satisfaction in various groups of enterprises, 9 selected determinants were diagnosed. For the analysis of the gathered material, a 5-level Likert scale was used, which allowed the authors to obtain a more detailed opinion on the impact of determinants on employees' satisfaction. Relationships between the variables: number of employees, how long a company has been functioning and how long an employee has worked in a given enterprise, and the answers contained in the survey questionnaire on rank scales, i.e. an employee's assessment of the enterprise's position on the market, assessment of an employee's chance to improve their qualifications and selected determinants of job satisfaction, were analysed by calculating Kendall tau rank correlation coefficients. Test probability  $p < 0.05$  was considered as significant, whereas test probability  $p < 0.01$  was considered as highly significant. The results were analysed using the statistical application PQStat ver. 1.6.

The survey shows that very small companies, i.e. employing up to 9 people, constituted the biggest group of the enterprises whose employees indicated factors impacting job satisfaction, accounting for almost 33% of the enterprises. They were followed by small enterprises, i.e. employing 10 to 49 people, which accounted for almost 27% of the enterprises, and large companies, i.e. employing over 250 people, accounting for over 24% of the enterprises. In total, the SME sector accounted for almost 76% of the enterprises whose employees were surveyed. The respondents were mainly working in services – this type of activity accounted for almost 37% of all types of activity, followed by manufacturing (25.3%) and commercial companies (16.5%). Overall, the respondents were new employees - almost 32% of them have been working in the current company for less than a year. The largest group of those surveyed, i.e. 40%, have worked in the current company from 1 to 5 years, almost 13% of employees have worked from 5 to 10 years, whereas 16% - for over 10 years. Among the enterprises, those functioning on the market for over 10 years prevailed and accounted for over 65%, enterprises operating for 5 to 10 years accounted for over 19%, whereas only 4 young companies could be called young.

#### 4. Results

**Determinants of Employees' Job Satisfaction - Results of Empirical Studies:** The survey shows that almost 85% of employees of the companies surveyed evaluate the position of their company as very good and good, whereas almost 14% evaluate it as poor and passable. No statistically significant dependence ( $p > 0.05$ ) was however identified between the evaluation of a company's position on the market, length of its functioning and length of an employee's work in a given enterprise (table 1). Thus, it turns out that such parameters as: the size of a company, length of its functioning on the market or period of employment in a given enterprise has no impact on the evaluation of the position of a company on the market.

**Table 1: Position of an enterprise on the market as evaluated by its employees**

	Number of employees in a company		How long a company has been functioning on the market		How long an employee has been working in a company	
	tau	p	tau	p	tau	p
Evaluation of an enterprise's position on the market	0.0862	0.1080	0.0774	0.1491	-0.0216	0.6877

Source: Own work based on a survey

Among the selected factors impacting satisfaction of enterprises' employees, 9 determinants influencing job satisfaction were distinguished. The survey shows that the determinants impacting job satisfaction most often indicated by the employees surveyed are: sense of security, which scored 4.02, and working conditions, which scored 4.01 on a five-level Likert scale. The factors that were least often indicated by employees were: possibility of promotion, development of career and additional benefits, which on average scored 3.24 and 3.00.

**Table 2: Determinants of job satisfaction and the size of an enterprise**

Job satisfaction determinants	Number of employees in a company	
	tau	p
working conditions	-0.2144	0.0001
remuneration	-0.1939	0.0003
sense of security	-0.2220	0.0000
policy towards employees	-0.1222	0.0226
atmosphere at work	-0.1872	0.0005
System of rewarding employees, bonuses, etc.	-0.1301	0.0152
possibility of promotion, development of career	0.0703	0.1901
investments in the development of an employee	0.0193	0.7185
additional benefits for an employee	0.0322	0.5476

Source: Own work based on a survey

The survey has showed that such determinants as: working conditions, remuneration, sense of security, atmosphere at work, are statistically highly significant and negatively correlated at a moderately low level with the number of employees in an enterprise, i.e. the size of a company. The factors: policy towards employees, system of rewarding employees, bonuses etc. are significant at a low level and negatively correlated with the number of employees in a company (table 2). Thus, it turns out that the smaller an enterprise, the more often the above-mentioned factors are indicated as ones impacting employees' satisfaction.

**Table 3: Job satisfaction determinants vs. how long a company has been functioning on the market**

Job satisfaction determinants	How long a company has been functioning on the market	
	tau	p
working conditions	-0,2571	0.0000
remuneration	-0,1782	0.0009
sense of security	-0,1104	0.0395
policy towards employees	-0,1107	0.0391
atmosphere at work	-0,1592	0.0030
System of rewarding employees, bonuses, etc.	-0,1897	0.0004
possibility of promotion, development of career	-0,0119	0.8249
investments in the development of an employee	-0,1388	0.0096
additional benefits for an employee	-0,1037	0.0530

Source: Own work based on a survey

The survey shows that how long a company has been functioning on the market, i.e. its age, is significant when evaluating the impact of selected factors on employees' job satisfaction. As many as 7 out of 9 determinants proved to be statistically highly significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) or significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) with the period of functioning of an enterprise on the market. In all the cases, a negatively correlated dependence was observed at a rather low level, only in the case of working conditions it was at a moderate level ( $\tau = -0,2571$ ) (table 3). In enterprises that have been functioning on the market for a shorter period of time, higher frequency of factors indicated as impacting satisfaction was observed, i.e. in young companies employees indicated more factors that impacted their job satisfaction, whereas in enterprises that have been functioning on the market for a longer period of time, a much lower frequency of indicating job satisfaction factors was observed.

**Table 4: Determinants of job satisfaction vs. how long an employee has been working in the company**

Job satisfactiondeterminants	How long an employee has been working in the company	
	tau	p
working conditions	-0.0820	0.1263
remuneration	-0.0041	0.9390
sense of security	0.0940	0.0798
policy towards employees	-0,0528	0.3250
atmosphere at work	-0.1961	0.0003
System of rewarding employees, bonuses, etc.	-0.0094	0.8611
possibility of promotion, development of career	-0.0816	0.1280
investments in the development of an employee	0.0972	0.0699
additional benefits for an employee	0.0759	0.1571

Source: Own work based on a survey

The survey of a group of employees of enterprises operating across Poland shows that the period of employment of an employee is not very significant statistically when evaluating factors impacting employees' satisfaction. Only in the case of the 'atmosphere at work' determinant, statistically highly significant dependence was observed ( $p=0.0003$ ). This dependence is negatively correlated at a moderately low level and means that the shorter the period of employment of an employee, the more often atmosphere at work is indicated as significant and determines job satisfaction of an employee (table 4). The survey shows that the evaluation of the possibilities of personal development through improvement of skills, competences and professional qualifications by an employee is statistically highly significant ( $p=0.003$ ) with the size of an enterprise. It turns out that the evaluation of the possibilities of employees' personal development is negatively correlated, though at a rather low level, with the number of employees, i.e. the more employees an enterprise employs, the less possibilities of improving qualifications.

**Table 5: Possibilities of employees' personal development**

	Number of employees in a company		How long a company has been functioning on the market		How long an employee has been working in a company	
	tau	p	tau	p	tau	p
Evaluation of the possibilities of employees' personal development	-0.1591	0.0030	0.0861	0.1085	0.0260	0.6284

Source: Own work based on a survey

Such dependence was not observed in the case of the length of functioning of a company on the market and period of employment in a given enterprise (table 5).

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of the survey of a group of very small, small, medium-sized and large enterprises operating across Poland was to show job satisfaction determinants of employees in enterprises functioning across Poland depending on the size of a company, how long a company has been functioning on the market and how long an employee has been working in a given company, as well as to define possibilities of employees' personal development. The factors affecting job satisfaction that were most often indicated in the questionnaire survey include: sense of security, which scored 4.02, and working conditions, which scored 4.01 on a 5-level scale, whereas the least often indicated factors include: possibility of promotion, development of career and additional benefits, which on average scored 3.24 and 3.00. Parameters such as the size of a company, how long it has been functioning on the market and period of employment of an employee in a given enterprise do not impact employees' evaluation of the market position of the enterprise they work for. It has also been found out that the more employees an enterprise employs, i.e. the bigger it's size, the less possibilities of

personal development of its employees. According to those surveyed, development possibilities in smaller companies are much greater.

The survey enabled verification of the research hypotheses formulated in the paper, namely:

- H1 has been partially confirmed; it has been found out that such determinants as: working conditions, remuneration, sense of security, atmosphere at work, are statistically significant and negatively correlated at a moderately low level with the number of employees in an enterprise, i.e. the size of a company; it has been found that the smaller an enterprise, the more often the above mentioned factors are indicated as impacting satisfaction of employees.
- H2 has been confirmed in general, as 7 out of 9 determinants have been found out to be statistically highly significant or significant with the length of an enterprise's functioning on the market - in all the cases, a negatively correlated dependence was observed at a rather low or moderate level; in enterprises that have been functioning on the market for a shorter period of time, satisfaction impacting factors were indicated more frequently, i.e. in young companies, employees indicated more factors that impacted their job satisfaction.
- H3 has generally not been confirmed, as the period of employment of an employee is not very significant statistically when evaluating factors impacting employees' satisfaction; only in the case of 1 out of 9 determinants a statistically highly significant dependence negatively correlated at a moderately low level was observed, which means that the shorter the period of employment of an employee, the more often atmosphere at work is indicated as significant and determining an employee's job satisfaction.

It is worth considering carrying out a similar survey on a representative group of enterprises or groups of enterprises in different countries in order to find regularities and present recommendations.

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